United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Coos Bay District
1300 Airport Lane
North Bend, Oregon 97459-2000
(541) 756-0100
(Email) coos_bay@or.blm.gov
(Home page) http://www.or.blm.gov/coosbay

1792
EA OR128-00-18, DNA 2

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Coos Bay District has reviewed a project to create wildlife tree (snag) and down log habitat in the Coquille River Watershed. Through a Documentation of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA), BLM has determined that a previously prepared Environmental Analysis (EA) document (EA OR128-00-18, Wildlife Habitat Tree and Log Creation, 2000) adequately analyzed this new action, and therefore, a new EA was not needed. Based on the conclusion of the DNA, a new Decision Record was prepared to adopt the Proposed Action of EA OR128-00-18 for the wildlife habitat tree and down log creation projects in the Coquille River Watershed. Copies of this Decision are available for review by mail, by phone at the number listed below, or at BLM Coos Bay District's home page at www.or.blm.gov/coosbay. The Decision is appealable for a period of 30-days, until July 25, 2002 by filing the necessary documents with the BLM office at the address below. Please direct requests for copies, questions, or appeal documents to Coos Bay District BLM, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, OR 97459-2000, ATTN T. Bolch, call (541) 756-0100, FAX (541) 751-4303, or e-mail to coosbay@or.blm.gov.

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File code: 1792

DNA 2
EA OR128-00-18

Decision Record for
Snag and Log Creation Projects Within Coquille River Watershed

Background:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Coos Bay District previously prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA OR128-00-18) and Finding of No Significant Impact to evaluate the effects of various methods for restoring wildlife habitat trees (e.g., snags) and down logs to mid- and late-seral stands on BLM-administered lands in the Middle and East Forks of the Coquille River. The objective was to bring the selected stands up to target levels of 1-2 snags per acre (in addition to existing structures) and to a minimum of 120 linear feet of logs per acre of decay classes 1 and 2. The EA analyzed a Proposed Action along with a No Action and an Alternative Action. A thirty-day public comment period ended on July 28, 2000. No comments were received from the general public, adjacent landowners, or interested citizens.

Decision:

My decision is to adopt the Proposed Action of EA OR128-00-18 for the snag and down log creation projects described in DNA No.2 for the Coquille River Watershed. Methods would include topping trees with explosives or chainsaws; girdling or slabbing trees; and inoculating trees with fungi to initiate heart rot.

The design features are accepted as described therein, including restrictions to minimize disturbance to nesting marbled murrelets and northern spotted owls.

Rationale for Decision:

The Proposed Action will treat stands where current deficits occur and where natural processes are unlikely to remedy the situation in the short term (30 years). It offers the greatest flexibility of methods for meeting habitat tree and log management goals, including the use of heart rot inoculants to create hollow trees, snags, and eventually down logs. Heart rot inoculation offers the promise of being an efficient, effective means for creating one of the most valuable features of forest wildlife habitat - a hollow living tree, snag, or log. It does this while presenting minimal hazard to other trees or to public safety when done according to the guidelines presented in the EA. The decision is in compliance with the *Coos Bay District Final Proposed Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* with its *Record of Decision* (BLM 1995), and the *Final Supplemental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl*, with its *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines* (Interagency 1994). Increases in these important habitat elements will benefit associated wildlife species and help to ensure their persistence within the landscape.

Monitoring:

Monitoring will be performed by the BLM in accordance with the *Snag and Wildlife Tree Monitoring Plan* (BLM 1998) and the monitoring plan for tree inoculation being developed in cooperation with the US Forest Service, Forest Insects and Diseases Lab. Both plans are on file at the BLM's Coos Bay District Office.

Decision recommended by:

Area Manager
Myrtlewood Resource Area: /s/ Richard Conrad Date: 6-19-02

Area Manager
Umpqua Resource Area: /s/ M. Elaine Raper Date: 6-19-02

Decision approved by:

District Manager: /s/ Sue Richardson Date: 6-19-02

DNA No. 2 to EA OR128-00-18
Documentation of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

A. BLM Office: Coos Bay District, Myrtlewood & Umpqua Field Offices **Lease/Serial/Case File No.** N/A
Proposed Action Title/Type: Wildlife Habitat Creation

Location of Proposed Action: Township 29S, Range 10W, Section 31; Township 30S Range 11W, Sections 01, 12 and 13 within the Middle Fork Coquille Watershed. Township 27S, Range 12W, Section 1 and 11 within the North Fork Coquille Watershed.

Description of the Proposed Action:
A wide variety of means would be used to create habitat trees (snags and hollow living trees with diameters ranging from 15-42 inches) and down logs. Methods would include topping trees with chainsaws or explosives; inoculating trees with heart rot fungi (*Phellinus pini*) cultivated from trees in the Coquille watershed; and removing up to 1/3 of the bark at the base of trees (cat-facing) to create hollows. The intent is to treat stands where current snag and down log deficits occur and where natural processes are unlikely to remedy the situation in the short term (30 years). Treated areas would include mid- (generally 50-80 years) to late-seral stands (> 80 years) in Late Successional Reserves and in Riparian Reserves within the General Forest Management Area (Matrix). Recreation areas will be avoided, and trees will be located outside of the post treatment height plus 30 feet of roads and trails. Specifically, habitat trees and down logs would be created singularly and in patches within stands in the North and Middle Forks of the Coquille River. Units will be selected where inventories or field reconnaissance identify a lack of these structures. Sufficient numbers of trees will be treated to bring the stands up to target levels of 1-2 snags per acre (in addition to existing structures) and to a minimum of 120 linear feet of logs per acre of decay class 1 and 2. Up to 1,780 trees may be treated throughout the District. Approximately half of the trees will be topped only and the remaining half inoculated (with or without topping) or cat-faced.

Applicant (if any): Not applicable.

B. Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans

LUP:
Coos Bay District ROD and Resource Management Plan (RMP) Date Approved: May 1995

Other documents:

Final Environmental Impact Statement on Managing of Habitat for Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and Record of Decision (NWFP)	Date Approved: April 1994
South Coast-Northern Klamath Late Successional Reserve Assessment	Date Approved: May 1998
North Fork Coquille Watershed Analysis	Date Approved: In prep.
East Fork Coquille Watershed Analysis	Date Approved: May 2000
South Fork Coquille Watershed Analysis	Date Approved: Nov. 2000

☒ The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUPs because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

The Final Environmental Impact Statement on Managing of Habitat for Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and Record of Decision acknowledge the importance of snags and down logs to wildlife and recommend mitigation and restoration projects to ensure their persistence.

The Coos Bay District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement recommends snag and down log creation to meet wildlife objectives.

The Coos Bay District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan specifically states that within the Matrix snags will be retained at levels sufficient to support species of cavity-nesting birds at 40% population levels.

The various Watershed Analyses identify current deficiencies of snags and down logs and recommend creating these structures to restore these key habitat elements to the landscape.

C. Identify applicable NEPA document(s) and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

Coos Bay District Environmental Assessment OR128-00-18 Wildlife Habitat Tree and Log Creation, 2000.

Coos Bay District Environmental Assessment OR120-97-11 Integrated Noxious Weed Control Program, 1997.

Biological Assessment for FY01-02 Timber Sales, Other Forest Removal Projects, Individual Tree Projects and Tree Climbing, July 2000, and subsequent Biological Opinion rendered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in September 2000.

In progress: Biological Assessment for FY03-08 ProgrammaticActivities on Coos Bay District BLM and subsequent Biological Opinion to be rendered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Biological Opinion for Section 7 Formal Programmatic Consultation and Magnuson-Stevens Act Essential Fish Habitat Consultation on Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, and BIA/Coquille Indian Tribe Actions Affecting Southern Oregon/Northern California Coho, Oregon Coast Coho Salmon, and Oregon Coast Steelhead. August 8, 2001.

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria.

1. Is the current proposed action substantially the same action (or is a part of that action) as previously analyzed?

Yes, the proposal to create snags and down logs is the same action previously analyzed with the addition of sites in the North Fork Coquille Watershed. This additional proposed area does not significantly differ in site characteristics from the other watersheds due to a common management history, therefore, effects are not expected to differ among the proposed and previously analyzed sites.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, resource values, and circumstances?

Yes. The range of alternatives analyzed was appropriate with respect to the proposal. The current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values have not changed.

3. Is the existing analysis adequate and are the conclusions adequate in light of any new information or circumstances (including, for example, riparian proper functioning conditions [PFC] reports; rangeland health standards and assessments; Unified Watershed Assessment categorizations; inventory and monitoring data; most recent Fish and Wildlife Service lists of threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species; most recent BLM lists of sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that all new information and all new circumstances are insignificant with regard to analysis of the proposed action?

Yes, the existing analysis is valid in light of the final designation of critical habitat for the marbled murrelet (Brachyramphus marmoratus) in Washington, Oregon, and California by the Fish and Wildlife Service, effective date June 24th, 1996 (61 FR 26256). It is reasonable to conclude that all new information and circumstances are insignificant with regard to analysis of the proposed action.

4. Do the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA document(s) continue to be appropriate for the current proposed action?

Yes, the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing documents continues to be appropriate for the proposal to create snags and down logs, and no valid new technologies or methodologies exist or are proposed.

5. Are the direct and indirect impacts of the current proposed action substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document(s)? Does the existing NEPA document sufficiently analyze site-specific impacts related to the current proposed action?

The potential direct and indirect impacts of the proposed creation of snags and down logs are substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA documents. The Biological Assessment for FY01-02 Timber Sales, Other Forest Removal Projects, Individual Tree Projects and Tree Climbing identified potential impacts associated with the creation of snags and down logs (e.g., blasting, climbing, and associated disturbance) and the rendered Biological Opinion outlines Project Design Criteria to mitigate for these effects. Impacts are addressed in terms of general landscape characteristics within the watersheds. The Biological Opinion for Section 7 Formal Programmatic Consultation and Magnuson-Stevens Act Essential Fish Habitat Consultation on Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, and BIA/Coquille Indian Tribe Actions Affecting Southern Oregon/Northern California Coho, Oregon Coast Coho Salmon, and Oregon Coast Steelhead determined that tree topping, girdling and other activities to enhance wildlife habitat would constitute a Not Likely to Adversely Affect (NLAA) effects determination on anadromous fish. Activities should not result in ground disturbance leading to a mechanism for sediment delivery to stream channels or a decrease in stream shade, coarse woody material supply, or stream bank stability. Additional mitigation measures are listed below. Site specific impacts were sufficiently analyzed in the existing EA.

6. Can you conclude without additional analysis or information that the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current proposed action are substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)?

Yes, the cumulative impacts are substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing EA.

7. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?

Yes, public involvement and interagency review of the EA was adequate for the current proposed action.

E. Interdisciplinary Analysis: Identify those team members conducting or participating in the NEPA analysis and preparation of this worksheet.

Name	Title	Resource Represented
Holly Witt	Wildlife Biologist	Myrtlewood Resource Area
John Chatt	Wildlife Biologist	Umpqua Resource Area
Nikki Moore	Fishery Biologist	Myrtlewood Resource Area
Nancy Brian	Botanist	Myrtlewood Resource Area
Stephen Samuels	Cultural Specialist	Myrtlewood Resource Area
Tim Votaw	Hazardous Materials	Myrtlewood Resource Area
Robert Raper	Noxious Weeds Specialist	Myrtlewood Resource Area
Dale Stewart	Soils Scientist	Myrtlewood Resource Area
Matt Azhocar	Hydrologist	Myrtlewood Resource Area
Rick Schultz	Forestry/Silviculture	Myrtlewood Resource Area

F. Mitigation Measures: List any applicable mitigation measures that were identified, analyzed, and approved in relevant LUPs and existing NEPA documents(s). List the specific mitigation measures or identify an attachment that includes those specific mitigation measures. Document that these applicable mitigation measures must be incorporated and implemented.

Wildlife: Actions will adhere to the Project Design Criteria (seasonal and daily timing restrictions) in the FY03-08 Programmatic Biological Opinion (in progress), if bald eagle, Northern spotted owl, or marbled murrelet nesting or habitat sites are within stipulated distances. Trees that contain potential nest platforms or unique habitat features (e.g. broken tops, decay) will not be treated. Trees will be inspected for red tree vole nests and, if present, will not be treated. Where required, survey and manage guidelines as amended in the NWFP will be adhered to for protection of known survey and manage species' sites.

Fisheries: Trees selected for snag creation will be outside of a two crown width distance (approximately 30 feet) from all streams. Near anadromous fish streams, tops will be directionally felled away from channels to avoid direct impacts to fish. Near resident cutthroat only streams and non-fish bearing streams, tops may be directionally felled toward the channel only during the period of July 1 to September 15. Power equipment is to be refueled at least 150 feet distant from water bodies, or as far as possible where conditions do not allow a 150-foot setback.

Botany: The standards and guidelines in the NWFP for Survey and Manage plants will be adhered to, as determined by a BLM staff botanist.

Conclusion

☒ Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the existing NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

Note: If one or more of the criteria are not met, a conclusion of conformance and/or NEPA adequacy cannot be made and this box cannot be checked.

Approved by: Myrtlewood Field Manager: Richard Conrad Date: 6-19-02

Umpqua Field Manager: M. Elaine Raper Date: 6-19-02